

Subj: MAXHR News Corner: within-grade increases and team-building.

1. The MAXHR design team has prepared the following questions and answers addressing two different topics that have been raised by a number of DHS employees. The first involves within-grade increases during the transition of DHS employees into the new system and the second addresses team-building.

Q: How will within-grade increases be handled upon conversion to the new system?

A: the MAXHR design team recognizes the importance of taking into account each employee's progress toward their next within-grade increase as they are transitioned into the new pay system. A likely method of managing this transition fairly will be to provide each employee with a prorated buyout to their next scheduled step, or within-grade, increase. For example, if you are at a gs-11, step 7 at the time of conversion to the new system, your pay in the new system would be set somewhere between step 7 and step 8, depending upon how much time you have remaining before being eligible for the step 8. The only employees who would not experience this slight increase in pay immediately upon conversion to the new system are those who are currently at step 10 of their current GS grade.

Q: Do you expect the new system to recognize team performance?

A: The creation of DHS was, to a very great extent, based on the expectation that enhanced interaction among the various agencies comprising the new department would result in greater coordination which, in turn, would lead to greater effectiveness and efficiency. In other words, component agencies functioning as part of a larger team would make each individual agency more successful. It is the intent that the new MAXHR system will support the team concept for this very reason. The concept of teamwork and how it will be reflected in the new system is an area of great interest on the part of many employees. DHS is currently in the process of developing an article addressing the various methods under consideration for inclusion in the new system. It is recognized that there are currently many innovative and successful approaches dealing with this concept throughout DHS. Please feel free to share with DHS your ideas and suggestions for successful approaches to team-building and recognition.

2. As always, your comments and suggestions are appreciated. If there is a topic or issue relating to the new system that you would like to see addressed in future MAXHR news corner articles please send your suggestions to MAXHR@DHS.gov.

3. Internet release authorized.

4. Released by Ronald R. Kogut, Chief, Office of Civilian Personnel.